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Thursday
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1 CHINA: SHIFT IN LASER ISOTOPE SEPARATION PROGRAM [REDACTED]

According to Chinese press releases, China recently conducted successful experiments using the atomic vapor laser isotope separation technique for uranium enrichment. The experiments signal a change in direction in Chinese laser isotope separation research and indicate that China is [REDACTED] decades away from operation of a commercial laser uranium enrichment facility. [REDACTED]

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CHINA: SHIFT IN LASER ISOTOPE SEPARATION PROGRAM

Chinese press releases of 17 and 29 November 1985 reported recent successes in separating uranium isotopes using the atomic vapor laser isotope separation (AVLIS) technique. The reported experiments were conducted at the Physicochemical Engineering Research Institute of the Nuclear Industry Ministry and at an unspecified institute of the Chinese Academy of Sciences.

Comment:

The importance of these experiments is not in the level of their achievements but in the direction change they signal for Chinese uranium laser isotope separation research. Following the lead of the Soviets, the Chinese concentrated on the molecular laser isotope separation (MLIS) technique during the 1970s. Uranium MLIS results similar to the recent AVLIS results were achieved in 1979. China now appears to be emphasizing uranium AVLIS techniques.

the Chinese are at least two decades away from operation of a commercial laser uranium enrichment facility. China has shown interest in marketing its uranium enrichment capability.

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